



Gill for Congress

U.S. — Israel Position Paper

OVERVIEW

The October 7, 2023, Hamas attacks marked one of the darkest days in modern Jewish history, a brutal assault that made clear that Hamas's core purpose is and always has been the destruction of Israel and the murder of Jews. Now, thanks to the sustained U.S.-Israeli cooperation and determined diplomacy, we have reached a ceasefire that has finally halted the violence and created space for real progress. With Hamas' military infrastructure damaged and its ability to wage war diminished, this new phase offers a sense of relief and hope that the region has not felt in years. Yet even in this moment of progress, we must keep the pressure on Hamas to fully disarm and continue to demand the return of the remains of the hostage who has not yet been brought home. Justice and closure for the families must be a non-negotiable part of the path forward.

As a member of Congress, I will work to ensure that the United States strengthens its unwavering support for Israel's security while helping to shape a post-Hamas Gaza that is stable, demilitarized, and incapable of threatening the Israeli people. America's role is not simply to respond to a crisis; it's to help secure a peace in which Israel is safe, thriving, and protected from terror.

HAMAS' ATTACKS

On October 7, 2023, the region changed forever as over five thousand Hamas terrorists invaded Israel, attacked Israeli military bases, cities, kibbutzim, and a concert venue. Over 1,200 people were killed, making it the deadliest day in Israeli history, with 251 people taken hostage. The stories emanating from that day will haunt the world for eternity. It was the deadliest attack on Jews since the Holocaust. These atrocities were not only acts of terror; they were attacks on Israel's very existence.

Hamas, the ruling government of Gaza for nearly two decades, bears responsibility for the suffering of both Israelis and Palestinians. Before the war started, Hamas' annual budget, funded in part by Iran, ranged in the hundreds of millions of dollars. Despite this, it is clear that Hamas has utterly failed the Gazan people, holding back Gaza's multi-billion dollar economy with a single-minded focus on the destruction of Israel rather than the well-being of their own people. Hamas siphoned funding for social services and infrastructure projects to build up their terrorist capabilities, including the construction of an elaborate tunnel system to store weaponry and transport people and goods as they planned for their October 7th attack. I mention these tunnel systems specifically because they are a perfect example of the choices Hamas has made – using tens of thousands of tons of steel and concrete to build 350-450 miles of tunnels and bunkers when civilian infrastructure crumbles above. As a member of Congress, I would also obviously support our continued joint anti-funding cooperation.

Electing Hamas decades ago has been catastrophic for the people of Gaza. Hamas's decision to embed command centers, rocket launchers, and weapons depots in hospitals, schools, and residential neighborhoods exposed their true strategy: sacrifice Palestinian civilians to shield terror operations and blame Israel for the consequences.

For me, this is personal. In 2024, I visited Israel to help get a better understanding of the country, the people, and the endlessly complicated issues they face. While touring the country was obviously very educational, visiting Nir Oz, the Nova music festival site, and meeting with the family of Hersh Goldberg-Polin had an even more profound impact on me. My stance in Congress will be clear and unwavering: Israel has the absolute right to defend itself, and the United States should be its partner in ensuring it has the ability to do so. Removing Hamas from power is not only essential for Israel's security, but it is also the only path to a better future for Palestinians as well.

As Gaza moves towards a post-Hamas future, we must continue supporting and pushing for robust humanitarian efforts that will allow civilians to rebuild their lives. Anything short of that only sows the seeds of future conflict.

THE CURRENT PHASE OF THE CONFLICT

The war has now entered a critical phase defined less by open combat and more by complex negotiations and cease-fire management, as the U.S. and Israel work closely to coordinate the next steps toward stability. This moment requires not only the continued dismantling of Hamas's military capabilities but also the development of a clear, forward-looking plan for post-Hamas governance in Gaza, one that prevents the group's re-emergence and lays the groundwork for lasting security. At the same time, it is imperative to address the profound humanitarian needs created by the conflict by surging the delivery of aid, the rebuilding of civilian infrastructure, and the support of displaced and injured populations. A Hamas-free future is possible, and clearly in the best interests of everyone in the region.

At home, Americans are deeply concerned by the conduct, duration, cost, and human toll of this war. That concern must inform U.S. policy: to sustain support for Israel, we must demonstrate that our engagement is principled, strategic, and ultimately aimed at a lasting resolution that works for all peace-loving people involved.

CURBING IRAN'S THREATS

Iran is the world's leading state sponsor of terrorism. It poses a fundamental threat to the future existence of both Israel and the U.S. Iran has formed a circle of terror around Israel's borders, funding Hezbollah, Hamas, the Houthis, and until recently, had proxies along the Syria-Israel border. Their stated goal is to destroy America and wipe Israel – and the Jewish people – off the face of the Earth.

The U.S. must prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon, full stop. Iran must understand that every option – from stepped-up economic pressure on the regime to the threat of targeted military action – is on the table in order to push them to a new disarmament deal. Any such deal must include strict, verifiable enforcement mechanisms that eliminate Iran's capacity to enrich uranium or produce fissile material. While the U.S. must work towards preventing Iran's nuclear ambitions, we must also stand up for the Iranian people, as they seek greater freedom against a tyrannical government that has held them back for decades. Strengthening U.S.–Israel

intelligence cooperation, including against Iran-linked networks, remains essential.

PURSUING A TWO-STATE SOLUTION AND A LASTING PEACE

I believe a two-state (or more) solution is possible and is an important step towards a lasting peace and security for Israel. As Americans, we have an important role to play in helping move negotiations forward while safeguarding Israel's territorial integrity and identity. We must continue to build on the Abraham Accords and encourage direct bilateral agreements throughout the Arab world.

- The post-ceasefire period demands a credible plan for Gaza governance, one that excludes Hamas from power, prevents its resurgence, and sets up a stable neutral administration.
- The United States must play an active role in Israel preserving its Qualitative Military Edge (QME). Supporting a multi-state solution must also mean opposing efforts that undermine that goal.
- Reconstruction must be multi-year and multilateral. The U.S. should work with regional and international partners on a rebuild plan that includes badly needed infrastructure, housing, and governance institutions. The global community must hold any future Palestinian government accountable for investigating and prosecuting terrorism, diversion of resources, corruption, and efforts to delegitimize the existence of the nation of Israel.

The path to a two-state solution is a difficult one, and the war has made it even more so. I think it is important to understand the damage done by October 7th and the aftermath and to approach these next steps with patience and empathy, as well as resolve. I believe we can achieve a lasting peace, and that America must continue to lead the way forward.

ADVANCING ISRAEL'S BIPARTISAN SUPPORT IN CONGRESS

In Congress, I will be a strong supporter of security assistance to Israel because as allies, our prosperity and safety are interconnected. The U.S. benefits from our strategic and technological partnerships, and fostering those connections is good for both countries. I fully support the 2016 MOU signed by President Obama, and as a member of Congress, I would support renewing that relationship with Israel – governed by existing laws on American aid, not additional restrictions.

- **SECURITY:** A cornerstone of the U.S.'s commitment is the robust support for Israel's missile defense capabilities. Iron Dome and David's Sling are integral parts of Israel's defense architecture, and have proven to be effective in intercepting incoming missiles and drones. Seemingly every week, a bad actor indiscriminately launches rockets into civilian centers in Israel. Without these tools, those terrorists would be able to grind all life in Israel – economic, educational, cultural, you name it – to a complete and total halt. I fully support funding the Iron Dome, ensuring that this technology remains cutting-edge and capable of defending Israeli civilians against evolving ballistic missile threats.
- I have noted previously that the United States must play an active role in Israel preserving its Qualitative Military Edge (QME).

- **BIPARTISANSHIP:** The U.S. is deeply divided on a number of issues, and the U.S.-Israel relationship is sadly no different. Obviously, the war has inflamed emotions, but I also believe a failure of leadership has deepened the fault lines. We cannot let Israel's security and future depend on just one political party. In Congress, I'll make it a priority to bring people together around common interests and beliefs to illustrate why Israel is not a partisan matter and why engaging across the political spectrum is good for the longevity and strength of our country's relationship.

STANDING UP TO ANTISEMITISM

In recent years, we have witnessed an explosion of antisemitism in the United States. Permissiveness toward hatred and cruelty at every level has seeped into our discourse and made people of many backgrounds significantly less safe. We must fight back against racism and hatred, and as a member of Congress, I will put the battle against antisemitism front and center, starting with supporting the formal adoption of the IHRA definition of antisemitism.

It is obvious that antisemitism is a problem across the political spectrum, and those of us on the left who are opposed to hatred in any form must continue to hold people accountable and speak out against what we see as problematic behavior. I am also deeply concerned by the cynicism with which some in the Republican party have approached this serious issue earlier this year, ignoring the rampant hatred in their own ranks in an effort to score cheap political points. This one-sided vision of the problem, combined with the purposeful conflation of disagreement with antisemitism, cheapens the fight against hatred and undermines the efforts of good-faith actors. I believe strongly in protecting the right to peaceful protest and free expression while drawing a clear line against threats, harassment, and discrimination.

PURSUING A FUTURE OF POSSIBILITY & SECURITY

I am hopeful for the future, for a stronger Israel, a safer region, and a world that stands more firmly against terror and extremism. Israel deserves not just to survive, but to flourish as a vibrant democracy, a hub of innovation, and a source of stability in a tumultuous region. A better future for Palestinians is also possible, but only if terrorism is rejected and accountable leadership emerges that seeks co-existence, not conflict.

In Congress, I will be a steadfast, unapologetic supporter of Israel and a committed partner in building a lasting peace rooted in security, dignity, and democracy.